AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A quick change cutting link for a saw chain for cutting wood, comprising a base member adapted to be pivotally connected to other links of the saw chain, said base member comprising a seat surface having a first taper; and a cutting member that comprises a cutting edge and releasably engages said base member, said cutting member including a surface having a second taper, said surface having the second taper constructed from sintered and compacted particles of abrasion resistant material, wherein said first taper and said second taper extend at an angle ranging from about 0.5° to about 45° relative to a direction of chain travel at a close tolerance effective to cause self-locking engagement of said first taper of said seat surface and said second taper of said cutting member surface.

2. (Previously Presented) The quick change cutting link of claim 1 wherein said close tolerance comprises no more than about 1°.

3. (Previously Presented) The quick change cutting link of claim 1 wherein said close tolerance comprises no more than 0.5°.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) The quick change cutting link of claim 1 wherein said base member comprises stamped metal.

6. (Original) The quick change cutting link of claim 1 wherein said base member comprises sintered and compacted particles of abrasion resistant material.

7. (Previously Presented) The quick change cutting link of claim 1 wherein said abrasion resistant material comprises at least one of metal and ceramic.

8. (Original) The quick change cutting link of claim 7 wherein said abrasion resistant material comprises a carbide containing compound.

9. (Original) The quick change cutting link of claim 8 wherein said carbide containing compound comprises a compound selected from the group consisting of tungsten carbide, silicon carbide, tantalum carbide and aluminum carbide.

10. (Previously Presented) The quick change cutting link of claim 1 wherein said abrasion resistant material comprises a tool steel alloy.

11. (Withdrawn) The quick change cutting link of claim 1 wherein one of said seat surface and said cutting member includes an inverted-L shaped protrusion and the other of said seat surface and said cutting member includes an inverted-L shaped recess for receiving said inverted-L shaped protrusion, and wherein one of said first taper and said second taper forms a surface of said L-shaped protrusion.

12. (Original) The quick change cutting link of claim 1 wherein at least one of said cutting member and said base member comprises a water-resistant material applied by a process selected from the group consisting of steam treatment, resin infiltration, copper infiltration and loctite infiltration.

13. (Original) A saw chain comprising a plurality of the quick change cutting links of claim 1.

14. (Previously Presented) The saw chain of claim 13 wherein said saw chain is adapted

for use on a saw comprising one of a chain saw, a timber harvester, a buck saw and a saw for cutting wood pallets.

15. (Currently Amended) A quick change cutting link for a saw chain for cutting wood, comprising a base member adapted to be pivotally connected to other links of the saw chain, said base member comprising a seat surface; and a cutting member that comprises a cutting edge and releasably engages said seat surface of said base member, wherein said cutting member and seat surface each consists essentially of sintered and compacted particles of abrasion resistant material.

16. (Previously Presented) A quick change cutting member for a saw chain for cutting wood, comprising a cutting edge and an interior recess having a surface having a taper extending at an angle ranging from about 0.5° to about 45° relative to a direction of travel of said cutting member when fastened on a chain, said taper having a close tolerance comprising no more than 0.5° to a mating taper of a base member, wherein said cutting member consists essentially of sintered and compacted particles of abrasion resistant material.

17. (Withdrawn) The quick change cutting member of claim 16 comprising one of an inverted-L shaped protrusion and an inverted-L shaped recess.

18.(Currently Amended) A base member of a cutting link for a saw chain for cutting wood, said base member being adapted to be pivotally connected to other links of the saw chain, said base member comprising a seat surface having a taper extending at an angle ranging from about 0.5° to about 45° relative to a direction of travel of the base member when fastened on the chain, said taper having a close tolerance comprising no more than 0.5° to ~~an~~ mating taper of a cutting member, wherein said base member consists essentially of sintered and compacted particles of abrasion resistant material.

19. (Previously Presented) A quick change cutting link for a saw chain for cutting wood,

comprising a base member adapted to be pivotally connected to other links of the saw chain, said base member comprising a seat surface having a first taper and a stop surface located upstream of said seat surface relative to the direction of travel of the chain; and a cutting member that comprises a cutting edge and releasably engages said seat surface of said base member, said cutting member including a surface having a second taper, wherein said first taper and said second taper extend at an angle ranging from about 0.5° to about 45° relative to a direction of chain travel at a close tolerance effective to cause locking engagement of said first taper of said seat surface and said second taper of said cutting member surface, and said cutting member comprises sintered and compacted particles of abrasion resistant material.

20. (Previously Presented) The quick change cutting link of claim 19 wherein said close tolerance comprises no more than 0.5°.

21. (Withdrawn) The quick change cutting link of claim 19 wherein one of said seat surface and said cutting member has an inverted-L shaped protrusion and the other of said seat surface and said cutting member has an inverted-L shaped recess for receiving said inverted-L shaped protrusion.

22. (Withdrawn) The quick change cutting link of claim 21 wherein one of said first taper and said second taper forms a surface of said L-shaped protrusion.

23. (Original) The quick change cutting link of claim 19 wherein said first taper and said second taper extend upwardly or downwardly from a location near said cutting edge in a direction opposite to said direction of chain travel.

24. (Original) The quick change cutting link of claim 19 wherein said angle is about 10 degrees or less.

25. (Withdrawn) The quick change cutting link of claim 19 wherein said cutting member includes a leading surface relative to said direction of chain travel which forms said cutting edge at an upper location of said leading surface, said leading surface having a radius of curvature for a given chain pitch that is proportional to a radius of about 0.25 inch for a chain pitch of 0.750 inch.

26. (Withdrawn) The quick change cutting link of claim 25 wherein said curvature is concave from a point of reference external to said cutting member.

27. (Withdrawn) The quick change cutting link of the claim 1 wherein the cutting member includes a recess to engage the base member.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Withdrawn) The quick change cutting link of claim 1 wherein the seat surface includes a vertically continuous protrusion extending upward from the base member to engage the cutting member.

30. (Withdrawn) The quick change of claim 1 wherein the seat surface includes a ridge internal wedge.